MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

17 DECEMBER 1982

Israel-Lebanon

Sharon's "Breakthrough," Talks With Habib -- After a series of secret talks with Lebanese officials, culiminating in a 16 December visit to Beirut and the Ash-Shuf region, Israeli Defense Minister Ari'el Sharon returned to Jerusalem to inform U.S. presidential envoy Philip Habib that Israel and Lebanon have achieved a "breakthrough" in the negotiations, Jerusalem radio reported. Israel and Lebanon have formulated a joint working paper that will serve as a basis for continued mutual dialogue and in which Lebanon gives its assent to the main points of the security arrangements and normalization demanded by Israel; henceforth, Israel attaches no decisive importance to the issue of the venue for the Israeli-Lebanese talks, the radio added.

Asserting that Sharon wants to prove to the United States that Israel and Lebanon can reach agreement on the normalization of bilateral relations without U.S. mediation, Jerusalem television said Philip Habib will nevertheless be needed to shuttle between Jerusalem, Beirut and Damascus to secure agreement on the evacuation of foreign forces. In his meeting with Sharon and Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin, Habib presented the new U.S. proposals on this issue, the television noted. According to Jerusalem radio, Israel is opposed to the U.S. proposals for an initial IDF withdrawal on all fronts.

Earlier, during his brief visit to Lebanon, Ari'el Sharon indicated that the Israeli-Lebanese talks were no longer stalled when he announced in an IDF radio interview that direct security-political negotiations between Israel and Lebanon are "very close." In a similar vein, Prime Minister Begin told the World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem that there are grounds for hope that Israel will reach a full peace agreement with Lebanon, according to remarks broadcast by Jerusalem radio. IDF radio said Washington is now Israel's preferred venue for the Israeli-Lebanese talks, though a different solution would also be possible.

U.S. Military Base in Lebanon -- The United States intends to establish a major military base in Lebanon after the evacuation of foreign forces, the Tel Aviv daily YOMAN HASHAVU'A reported. Lebanese President Amin al-Jumayyil favors the proposal, the paper said, and Israeli officials believe the plan for a base is the underlying reason for U.S. insistence on a total IDF evacuation of Lebanon.

Lebanese-Syrian Contacts -- Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad sent President al-Jumayyil a reply message expressing satisfaction and happiness with the contents of al-Jumayyil's earlier message and agreeing on the importance of continuing the contacts and coordination between the Syrian and Lebanese leaderships, Voice of Lebanon radio reported. Al-Asad's reply to his Lebanese counterpart was delivered by the Lebanese special envoy, whose meeting with the Syrian leader was characterized by a "positive and extremely amicable atmosphere," according to Radio Monte Carlo's Louis Faris, quoting "informed sources."

Lebanese Security Situation -- Despite the recent cease-fire announcement, further clashes erupted in the northern city of Tripoli, causing a number of casualties, Voice of Lebanon radio reported. The fighting reportedly occurred soon after a higher coordination committee meeting that was not attended by the Popular Resistance, which is an anti-Syrian faction. Meanwhile, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported that Socialist and Communist gunmen killed a Christian woman and wounded three men in an ambush in the Ash-Shuf hills. However, the clandestine Voice of Arab Lebanon radio blamed the continuing explosive situation in the Ash-Shuf on the "intransigence" of the Christian militias toward any solution that does not affirm their control over the

area. Reporting from the south, the radio also claimed that the leader of Maj Sa'd Haddad's militias in An-Nabatiyah was killed by a car bomb. However, Haddad's command subsequently denied that the person killed belonged to Haddad's forces, Jerusalem radio reported. In another development, a parliamentary deputy narrowly escaped assassination in Beirut, according to the Voice of Lebanon.

Unconfirmed Syrian-IDF Clash -- Although Radio Monte Carlo reported that Israeli and Syrian forces in the Al-Biqa' Valley exchanged artillery fire for several hours on 15-16 December, monitored Lebanese media did not mention any such incidents

PLO

Tunis Meeting -- PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will preside over an Executive Committee meeting in Tunis to discuss results of talks held by the Higher Palestinian-Jordanian Committee in Amman, Baghdad Voice of PLO reported.

DFLP Position -- The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) approved the PLO leadership's policy of establishing normal relations with Jordan and forming the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Committee, DFLP Political Bureau member Abu Layla said in an interview with Radio Monte Carlo. However, the DFLP does not believe that President Ronald Reagan's peace plan constitutes a serious and immediate basis for finding a political solution to the existing crisis, Abu Layla added. Asked about Palestinian-Syrian differences, the DFLP official said these differences cannot possibly affect the "profound strategic alliance" between Syria and the Palestinian Revolution and do not require mediation by a third party.

Jordan

While the coming talks between King Husayn and President Reagan will be "extremely important," Jordan should not be held responsible for the fate of the Reagan plan, the Amman paper AR-RA'Y affirmed in an editorial reported by Amman radio.

Iraq

The "Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq" announced that Iraqi mujahidin were responsible for the bomb that "completely destroyed" the INA building in Baghdad, according to Tehran radio's Arabic service. In a related statement reported by IRNA, the mujahidin said a vehicle loaded with explosives was smashed into the building, causing an explosion that killed or wounded "hundreds" of Iraqi officials.

However, INA continued to transmit, and President Saddam Husayn and other officials visited the INA offices, according to reports by Baghdad Voice of the Masses radio and INA itself.

Afghanistan

Soviet Airstrikes -- Soviet planes recently bombed rebel positions in Paktia Province, killing or wounding some 26 mujahidin, AFP reported citing Afghan sources in Islamabad.

Kabul Tremor -- A strong earthquake shook Kabul and adjacent provinces early on 16 December, BAKHTAR reported.

YAR Earthquake

The toll from the earthquake in Dhamar Province is now 1,448 dead and 1,489 injured, Prime Minister 'Abd al-Karim al-'Iryani announced in a statement reported by San'a' radio. He said 253 towns and villages have been destroyed and up to 400,000 people are homeless.

FBIS DAILY REPORT

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GUERRILLA POSITIONS IN PAKTIA 'HEAVILY BOMBED'

BK170045 Hong Kong AFP in English 0030 GMT 17 Dec 82

[Text] Islamabad, Dec. 17 (AFP) -- Soviet war planes heavily bombed anti-communist guerrilla concentrations in eastern Paktia Province last Tuesday, killing at least 12 mujahedeen and wounding 14 other Moslem fighters, the rebel-run Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported yesterday.

The massive bombing raids followed reports from Western correspondents who secretly visited parts of Paktia Province last month that Afghan rebels were preparing for an offensive against Dargai District, near Khost. The guerrillas had captured Lieza, 15 km (9 miles) southwest of the provincial capital Khost, they said after the clandestine visit.

The Soviet bombing raids set afire seven mujahedeen tents, so that ammunition burned and some explosions occurred, causing unusually high rebel losses, AIP added. The agency said the casualties included the guerrilla group leader, who was a member of the Peshawar-based resistance organisation Hezb-e Islami Afghanistan, headed by Mohammad Yubis Khalis.

The leader, Mohammed Anwar, is the third commander Hezb-e Eslami has lost within one month. Khalis group men, who are reportedly active in Nangarhar Province, also suffered severe losses last month when the Soviet troops pounded their main centers, Tura Bura and Khogiani, in that province. The agency said the area's chief commander, Fatehulla Haqqani, "miraculously escaped" the raids.

The agency said the same day, Moslem rebels attacked a 30-vehicle convoy carrying ammunition to Bari military post, near Khost. The guerrillas killed or wounded five soldiers and destroyed two tanks and one military truck in that ambush, it said.

Meanwhile in Kabul, Jaji tribesmen staged a protest strike last Monday, suspending transport and closing down shops to protest against the regime's new conscription laws, AIP said. About 200 shopkeepers suspended business in Shoba Bazaar, Kalachi and Jada Maiwand in downtown Kabul, demanding repeal of the new draft laws, which withdrew concessions enjoyed by the Jaji tribesmen belonging to Paktia. Western diplomatic sources said this week that the regime had reached a compromise on the issue after several similar strikes in past few months.

The tribesmen hailing from Paktia Province were exempted from conscription during exiled King Tahir Shah's time. But the current Afghan regime, concerned over large-scale defections, modified the rules -- making it compulsory for Jaji tribesmen living outside Paktia Province to join army service. This caused unrest among people residing in Kabul, it said. Jajis want their men living outside their hometown also to be exempted.

'COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES CRUSHED' IN SAMANGAN

LD162318 Kabul Domestice Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] A group of counterrevolutionary elements who had been disrupting the peaceful life of the toiling people of (Kojker) village of Aybak City, Samangan Province, have recently been crushed by the officers and men of this province's operational battalion. Assorted weapons and a large number of bullets were seized from these criminals.

AFP INTERVIEWS SECRET POLICE DEFECTOR 17 DEC

BK170145 Hong Kong AFP in English 0022 GMT 17 Dec 82

[Text] Peshawar (northwest Pakistan), Dec. 16 (AFP) -- The former deputy head of Afghanistan's secret police, General Ghulan Siddiq Miraki, told Agence France-Presse here today from his Pakistani exile that the Kabul administration employed 25,000 secret agents, including those infiltrated into Iran and Pakistan.

The general, who claims he all along worked for the Afghan fundamentalist Islamic opposition, said the Soviet Union had lost more than 40,000 men since its intervention in Afghanistan two years ago, and that unspecified number of East German, Bulgarian, Cuban and Vietnamese military were fighting alongside them.

General Siddiq made international headlines earlier this week with statements to Britain's BBC that Moscow planned to annex all or part of Afghanistan.

In today's interview, the general specified that the late Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, according to "high-level Afghan and Soviet sources in Kabul", planned incorporating Afghanistan into the Soviet Union last spring. In the face of the stubborn resistance to Babrak Karmal's Kabul administration, the general went on, the Kremlin later envisioned annexing only Afghanistan's eight northern provinces and pulling out of the rest of the country. This solution was still being considered by Moscow, the general asserted.

These eight provinces, according to General Siddiq, cover about a third of the country and are rich in mineral resources, including traces of uranium discovered by Soviet prospectors in Bradsham.

As to the Afghan secret agents, the general said they were organized on the lines of the Soviet Union's K.G.B., led by Soviet generals, and trained in special academies in Moscow, Tashkent in Central Asia, or Kabul.

The general's figure for Soviet losses was seen by observers as way beyond Western estimates, which have been on the order of 15,000 against his 40,000.

The general discounted persistent rumors that Moscow wished to replace Mr Karmal, but said that his rule was increasingly resented by several factions supporting Premier Soltan Ali Keshtmand, because Mr Karmal had not acceded to his post through any party election.

GENERAL ERSHAD ADDRESSES NATION 16 DECEMBER

BK170804 Dhaka Domestic Service in Bengali 0100 GMT 17 Dec 82

[Excerpts] Chief Martial Law Administrator [CMLA] Lieutenant General H.M. Ershad has declared his government is firmly determined to hand over power to the people's representatives by peaceful means.

Addressing the nation over radio and television last night, he said: We don't want to continue martial law forever. What we want is the welfare of the masses and revival of the sovereignty of the people. The CMLA said the present government seeks to introduce a democratic system that will be a real democracy and will ensure the country's overall development.

Referring to the initial reorganization of the administrative structure at the police zone level, the CMLA said that, with the direct participation of the people in the administration, a process of democratization will be introduced, leading to the establishment of a future democratic system. General Ershad said that, with the implementation of the revolutionary programs for improving the destiny of the general masses, the transfer of power to the people by peaceful means will be made effective. The CMLA said preparations for voters' lists will begin next month for holding elections to the union and police zonal councils sometime toward the end of next year. After that, there will be elections for district councils followed by elections at the national level.

Referring to the economic situation, the CMLA said that, to make the current complicated taxation system reasonable, new taxation laws will be introduced and [words indistinct] are being implemented for increasing investments and production in industries. The rate of inflation successfully has been brought under control and the prices of commodities in the open market gradually are becoming stable. He said the second 5-year plan is being amended to prepare a midterm assessment and to initiate work on the drafting of the next plan.

The CMLA said that, to become self-sufficient in food in 2 years, the present government has given priority to all areas of agriculture and made several arrangements in this regard. The target for this year's agricultural credit has been fixed at 8 billion taka and the system of sanctioning credits has been simplified. He said 7 million acres of land will be brought under cultivation by 1985 and a 2-year program to supply high-yield varieties of paddy seeds to this land also has been undertaken. Referring to land reform, the CMLA said a committee already has submitted its recommendations and the government will seriously consider them and take steps to implement them without affecting the ownership of the land. He said special steps already have been taken to encourage people to set up export-oriented industries.

The CMLA said the government believes in an independent and responsible press. Therefore, all government controlled newspapers and periodicals will either be [word indistinct] or returned to their Bangladeshi owners by 21 February 1983. He said Radio Bangladesh and television will be brought under one authority to economize their expenditures and to improve efficiency.

Referring to foreign policy, General Ershad said the main objective of Bangladesh's foreign policy is to establish friendship with all nations especially neighboring states. He said that, recently at the United Nations, Bangladesh's election as the vice chairman of the Group of 77 proved its strong support to the interest of the Third World. He said Bangladesh has taken steps to revitalize the South Asian forum. He reiterated that for the sake of peace and development, Bangladesh has become a member of the Islamic Peace Committee, Al-Quds Committee, Islamic Collective Fund and Permanent Committee of Islamic Information and Culture.

He said that, by pursuing a realistic and progressive foreign policy since coming to power, the government has achieved remarkable success within a short time. He said safeguarding the national independence and sovereignty and providing for the welfare of the people are the objectives of his government's foreign policy.

'OVERALL SITUATION' IN BARODA REPORTED 'PEACEFUL'

BK170900 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 17 Dec 82

[Text] In Baroda, curfew was relaxed for 3 to 5 hours this morning. People moved freely in the market to buy essential commodities. The state home minister told the All India Radio Ahmedabad correspondent that the overall situation continues to be peaceful except for one stabbing incident.

Meanwhile, the army, border security force and the reserve police are patrolling sensitive areas.

SIKH VETERANS REFUSE TO SUPPORT AGITATION

BK170958 Hong Kong AFP in English 0830 GMT 17 Dec 82

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Excerpts] New Delhi, Dec 17 (AFP) -- Retired Sikh soldiers today rejected an appeal by Sikh leader Harchand Singh Longowal to joint the drive for autonomy for the Sikh state of Punjab.

"It will be a sad day for ex-servicemen, a disciplined and non-political section of the society, if they are corrupted for political purposes," chief of the Punjab's ex-soldiers association Maj Gen Rajeswhwar Singh Sohal said. In a statement issued in Chandigarh, the capital city Punjab shares with Hindu-dominated Haryana State, the retired general said he had appealed to all former Sikh soldiers to reject the call. "We refuse to be exploited by political parties," he said.

"A few persons who have been voicing support are doing the greatest damage and disservice to the ex-servicemen and their cause," the statement said. It referred to the claims by the Sikh party, Akali Dal, that many prominent retired Sikh officials including an Indian Army general were supporting the present agitation.

The appeal from Mr Longowal came on Tuesday when he dispatched identical letters to former Sikh soldiers asking them to join hands with the party and to fight the Federal Indian Government. "The Sikhs are in great difficulty at present...we are in need of your service and cooperation at this time of great turmoil", Mr Longowal's letter said.

Federal officials had voiced concern at the call by Mr Longowal, who last week reiterated that protests would escalate unless Prime Minister Indira Gandhi accepted Sikh demands.

Maj Gen Sohal said "our politikisation will inevitably affect the serving personnel whose morale, discipline and leadership will be undermined....It will also seriously affect the resettlement of former soldiers, recruitment policy of the federal government and the security of the nation."

"It will tarnish the glorious traditions of the soldiers of Punjab", he said.

The statement was signed by several officials in the ranks of brigadiers, colonels, and majors.

ZIA ADDRESSES OVERSEAS PAKISTANIS IN OTTAWA

BK161149 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] President Mohammad Ziaul Haq has said his visit to Canada is aimed at promoting bilateral relations still further. Addressing a largely attended gathering of overseas Pakistanis in Ottawa last night, he said Pakistan and Canada have a joint trade and economic council and we will see how best the two countries could increase their bilateral relations through increased trade.

The president described his visit to the United States as very successful and according to his expectations. This, he added, would have a beneficial effect on Pakistan. It was a result of the successful foreign policy pursued by his government.

About the acquisition of nuclear technology, the president said Pakistan was working on a modest nuclear program with the sole objective of using it for peaceful purposes. Pakistan, as a developing country, has the right to acquire this technology as it was essential to meet the growing needs of energy for development and progress. At the same time, Pakistan is a peace-loving nation and stands for peace in the region and the world at large.

Referring to Kashmir, the president said Pakistan stands for solving the issue peacefully within the framework of UN resolutions and in the spirit of the Simla Agreement.

President Mohammad Ziaul Haq said his government wants that English should be retained in addition to the national Urdu language in order to ensure the country's progress in science and technology. Arabic should also be retained in view of Pakistan's close relations with the Arab brethren as well as to comprehend the holy Koran. Radio Pakistan's representative, in a dispatch from Montreal, says the president was repeatedly cheered by the large audience during his hour-long address which included a question-and-answer session.

ZIA ACCUSED OF GIVING 'WRONG PICTURE' TO U.S.

BK170315 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 17 Dec 82

[Text] Pakistan's main opposition political group -- the Movement for Restoration of Democracy -- has accused Pakistan President General Ziaul Haq of presenting a wrong picture of the country during his visit to the United States earlier this month.

The movement's temporary chairman, Malik Mohammad Qasim, said thousands of people, including political workers and lawyers, are in jail. He alleged that courts have been deprived of their powers and fundamental rights have been suspended. He said his organization supports lawyers campaign for the constitution of civil government to replace the military rule.

Reports say that in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir there have been increasing protests against the military rule.

THE MUSLIM REPORTS DIFFERENCES WITHIN MRD

GF151210 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 11 Dec 82 p 6

[Bureau report]

[Text] Karachi, Dec. 10 -- The differences among the components of MRD [Movement for Restoration of Democracy], other than Pakistan People's Party, are surfacing again with allegations and counterallegations.

In a recent statement, the secretary of information of National Democratic Party [NDP], Abid Zubairi, accused Khwaja Khairuddin of being inefficient and incapable for the post of secretary general of MRD.

In a rejoinder the secretary of Karachi Muslim League (Khairuddin group) Ishrat Ali Nagori, said that everybody knew Mr. Zubairi "politically stands no where".

When contacted Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Sardar Sherbaz Mazari both regretted this attitude within the MRD and asked the leaders to avoid expressing their personal likes and dislikes in public. Sardar Mazari is understood to have taken Mr Zubairi to task for issuing such a statement against Khwaja Khairuddin.

When contacted Mr Mazari said that as far as NDP was concerned Khwaja Khairuddin was unanimously elected secretary general of MRD and the party had no complaint against him.

Mr Jatoi said that in the next meeting of MRD he would ask the members to desist from issuing this sort of statement against each other. "The differences could be discussed and thrashed out within MRD".

Khwaja Khairuddin when contacted refused to say anything. "If I have to say anything I would talk to Sardar Mazari. He is the head of the party not Mr Zubairi", he said.

BRIEFS

PRC ARMY DELEGATION -- A delegation of the Chinese People's Liberation Army military college arrived in Karachi on 9 December on a 10-day visit to Pakistan. The delegation is led by the college Deputy Commandant General Yang Zhen. [Text] [Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 9 Dec 82 BK]

WORLD FOOD PROGRAM AID -- Under an agreement signed in Islamabad 16 December, the World Food Program is to provide $18.56 million to Pakistan for Tarbela and Mangla watershed management projects. [Text] [Karachi Domestic Service in English 1005 GMT 16 Dec BK]

PETROLEUM MINISTER COMMENTS ON OPEC ISSUES

LD161850 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] On the eve of the OPEC petroleum ministers' meeting in Geneva, Petroleum Minister Gharazi, who will lead Iran's delegation to the gathering, held a news conference today and answered questions from foreign and domestic journalists regarding the regulation of OPEC oil production, oil prices and the election of a new OPEC secretary general.

According to our correspondent, with regard to fixing quotas for OPEC oil production, Charazi said: A year and several months have passed since Iran proposed an OPEC production ceiling. Now, some of the OPEC members who had previously rejected the idea of quotas are defending it. He added: We hope that quotas will be allocated logically, proportionate to populations, to the extent of resources and to the currency and material needs of each member country. According to this principle, those countries having a lower population and higher income are required to reduce their quotas and those with larger populations and lower incomes should increase their quotas.

Regarding Iran's oil production quota, the petroleum minister said: If the principles for setting quotas are taken into consideration, Iran's quota should be over 3 million barrels a day while, today, we do not need more than 3 million barrels a day.

Regarding the official oil price of $34 per barrel, he said: Over 78 years, 30 billion barrels of oil have been exported from Iran at low prices. The economies of the European countries were built on cheap oil. In our opinion, oil prices must be fixed on the basis of substitute forms of energy. Thus, although Iran supports the $34 price for crude, it does not consider this a fair price.

Regarding the election of a new OPEC secretary general who, according to the OPEC constitution, should come from Iran, Gharazi said: Now, 22 years after the formation of OPEC, it is Iran's turn to present a secretary general to OPEC for the second time. During the conference, I will introduce five of our brothers to OPEC. They are aware of the situation regarding oil resources and are experienced in oil issues. We hope to run OPEC and its institutions in the interests of the oppressed and to help solve OPEC's problems.

The petroleum minister and the members of Iran's delegation left Tehran for Vienna this afternoon to take part in the OPEC petroleum ministers' conference. This conference, which was supposed to have been held in Nigeria, will meet in Vienna on Saturday following requests from several OPEC member countries.

MUJAHIDIN CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR INA BOMBING

GF161126 Tehran International Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] The Supreme Islamic Revolution Council of Iraq has announced that the Martyr Abu Ja'far group from the Iraqi mujahidin movement yesterday blew up the Iraqi News Agency [offices] in Baghdad by using a car filled with 400-kg of TNT.

This heroic operation was carried out by the hero, Abu Fida', who was martyred during the operation.

The sound of the explosion was heard throughout Baghdad. The explosion completely destroyed the INA building, killing seven people and wounding many others.

We will inform you of the details of this heroic operation in later newscasts.

IRNA Cites Statement on Blast

LD162152 Tehran IRNA in English 2010 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] Tehran, Dec 16, IRNA -- Following last night's huge bomb explosion at the headquarters of the Iraqi News Agency (INA) in Baghdad, the "Iraqi mujahideen movement" issued a statement here today saying that while the building was totaly destroyed, hundreds of Iraqi officials were killed or wounded as a result as well.

The statement said that the operation was carried out by a member of the group driving a Landrover loaded with 400 kilogrammes of TNT. It said that Abu Fida' smashed the car against the building known as the headquarters of the Iraqi News Agency.

The statement added that another adjacent building linked with the Iraqi security organisation was also destroyed.

It said that the operation was named after the Iraqi revolutionary council, announced last November 17th, "in order to demonstrate to the people of the world that the only legal leader of the children of our Muslim nation is Imam Khomeyni and the Iraqi revolutionary council is the only legal representative of our innocent people."

The statement said that the operation was carried out at night at a time when there were no passersby therefore it said that the Iraqi regime was lying that only a few pedestrians had been killed. [as received]

It further said that other mujahideen involved in the operation left leaflets against the Iraqi regime in the same area and returned to their bases safely.

Earlier today a spokesman for the movement contacted the IRNA office in Damascus and announced that the group had taken responsibility for the blast.

This has been the second major bomb attack against Iraqi Government offices in Baghdad this year. The first attack occured a few months ago when a huge explosion killed scores of Iraqi Government officials at the Iraqi Planning Ministry.

IRAQI POW'S ASK TO FIGHT ON BATTLEFRONTS

LD152110 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 Dec 82

[Text] According to an IRNA report, about 700 Iraqi POW's staying in Tehran's Heshmatiyeh camp sent a 40-page petition to the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, requesting permission to go to the battlefronts of good against evil and, shoulder to shoulder with Islam's powerful combatants, to wage war against Saddam's Zionist army. The Iraqi POW's also expressed their full support for Iraq's Supreme Islamic Revolution Council.

According to this report, Iraqi POW's in the Davudiyeh, Mashhad and Torbate-e Jam camps also sent letters requesting permission to go to the battlefronts to wage battle together with the combatants of Islam to liberate Iraq as soon as possible from the yoke of Zionist Saddam.

Similarly, according to a Central News Unit report, Iraqi POW's in the Manjil camp supported Iraq's Supreme Islamic Revolution Council and denounced Iraq's Zionist regime. They also asked to be dispatched to the battlefronts of good against evil. According to the same report, the Iraqi POW's also donated 67,000 rials to the camp's political-ideological office as aid to the combatants of Islam.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE NO 1,154

LD161830 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Communique No 1,154 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. We humbly express condolences in connection with the anniversary of the martyrdom of the eighth bright star of the firmament of the imamate and sainthood, the sentinel of right and truth, the holy 'Ali ibn Musa ar-Rida -- may peace be upon him! A resume of combat operations during the past 24 hours:

An exchange of fire continued yesterday throughout the country's western fronts. In the Muslim ibn 'Aqil operational zone, our combat units opened fire on enemy positions, destroyed one tank and one of their vehicles and damaged two armored personnel carriers and one mortar launcher.

By opening antibattery fire on the enemy's artillery and mortar positions on the fronts from Sar-e Pol-e Zahab to Naftshahr, the heroes of Islam's army silenced the aggressors' heavy weapons fire. One enemy motor park also was set ablaze and several squad and one-man fire trenches of the Iraqi forces were destroyed.

During an exchange of fire in the Marivan region, a number of Iraqi installations, weapons and squad trenches were destroyed and a number of Saddamist troops were killed, thanks to the intense heavy weapons fire of Islam's combatants.

Whie returning enemy fire in the Moharram operational zone and on the country's southern fronts, Islam's proud heroes defended their own positions. In the Abadan region, thanks to fire opened by our own units, a number of mercenary squads and one-man fire trenches and several of their vehicles were destroyed. A number of the enemy's troops also were either killed or wounded.

The city of Abadan yesterday came under sporadic enemy fire. As a result of mortar strikes, three buildings were destroyed and one of our compatriots was wounded.

During the past 24 hours, several raiding enemy aircraft appeared in the skies of the southern and western border regions. However, thanks to the vigilance and timely fire opened by our antiaircraft units, the enemy planes were forced to flee before carrying out their missions.

[Signed] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

SPEAKER MEETS 'JERUSALEM BATTALION' COMMANDERS

GF170622 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 17 Dec 82

[Excerpts] The commanders of the Jerusalem Battalion of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, accompanied by Colonel Sayyad-Shirazi, commander of this reserve force, last night met Islamic Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

During this meeting, Col Sayyad-Shirazi explained the selection of commanders for the Jerusalem Battalion: These people have been handpicked from among combat troops fighting on the frontlines and all of them have been present on the front right from the beginning of the war. They also have a very high ideological level. He added: These commanders are also conversant with fighting fascists and the moral aspect of the popular forces. They have the necessary qualities needed for this responsibility.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani then expressed his appreciation of the troops who have fought at the fronts for months: The formation of the Jerusalem Battalion is the forging of a natural, selected link between the Armed Forces and the people and one of the most essential political, religious and military tasks.

The Islamic Majlis speaker stressed the need for greater vigilance on the part of the combatant forces. In his address to the Jerusalem Battalion commanders, he said: Our aim, motto and the banner of our revolution and your call to the truth, justice, Islam and nobility have many enemies in the world and we cannot rest assured that in the future enemies will not create problems for us.

In another part of his speech to the commanders of the Jerusalem Battalion, the Islamic Majlis speaker said: The Koran says we must always be prepared so that enemies will be afraid of us. We hope our alertness will prevent wars. The very presence of the people among you and your presence among the people and such projects as the establishment of the Jerusalem Reserve Force, which is a very significant one, can intimidate our enemies so that not even the thought of imposing another war will enter anyone's head.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: The world will see that the Islamic Republic does not utilize its forces for aggression, however strong it may be. The smallest of states in our vicinity, the same states with populations of a few hundred thousand in the Persian Gulf, who are blatantly engaged in assisting our enemy and are providing it with ports, routes and propaganda, will see that we believe in forgiveness. However, preparation is a necessity and the only way to guarantee security of our youth and our nation is that we should be strong. And one of the steps for this purpose was the formation of this Jerusalem Battalion.

TEHRAN GOVERNORATE ELECTION RESULTS UPDATED

LD161445 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Summary] Tehran Governorate has announced the latest vote count in the Council of Experts elections. By 1300 today, the number of votes counted in 1,581 polling stations reached 2,017,383. Results so far are:

Khamene'i	1,750,278
Hashemi-Rafsanjani	1,672,490
Musavi-Ardabili	1,524,118
Meshkini	1,496,821
Emami-Kashani	1,474,595
Mohammadi-Gilani	1,319,865
Sane'i	1,284,105
Baqeri-Kani	1,259,175
Asadi-Khunsari	1,212,390
Rezvani	1,196,211
Azari-Qomi	1,178,311
Khosrushahi	1,066,642
Rasti	1,054,914
Iravani	985,721
Khalkhali	690,917
Reyshahri	587,577
Haqqi	208,621

VILLAGES 'CLEANSED' OF 'COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES'

LD161736 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] Continuing the mopping-up operations in Kordestan villages, the combatants of Islam last week conducted a series of coordinated operations with the support and cooperation of the inhabitants and cleansed the village of (Shiyan) -- the counter-revolutionaries' main base on the Sanandaj-Qorveh axis -- and from the filth of outlaws and counterrevolutionaries.

The Hamzeh Seyyed as-Shohada headquarters has announced that in the course of these successful operations, which were carried out with the bravery and heroism of the combatants of Islam, two other villages on the same axis also were mopped up.

KHAMENE'I RECEIVES OUTGOING INDONESIAN ENVOY

GF151632 Tehran IRNA in English 1555 GMT 15 Dec 82

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 15, IRNA -- The Indonesian ambassador to Tehran, Imam Supomo, whose assignment in Tehran has ended, conferred with President Khamene'i, here today.

During the meeting the Indonesian ambassador referring to cultural relations between Iran and Indonesia said that during his service in Iran, he has witnessed progress of the Islamic Republic Government and this indicated that the Islamic revolution would advance and would continue to enjoy stability.

In reply the president of the Islamic Republic said that the Islamic revolution of Iran was based on Islamic principles and, therefore, it would struggle against all those powers which did not respect humanity. Because of this, he added, the Islamic Republic Government expected Muslim governments to support Iran in its campaign for independence. However, big powers prevented Muslim governments and nations from fulfilling their Islamic obligation, i.e. supporting of Muslim people of Iran.

Concluding the president stressed the need for further unity and good relations among Muslim countries.

FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL MEETS WITH YAR CHARGE

GF160924 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] The YAR charge in Tehran yesterday met with the political director general at the Foreign Ministry who expressed to him the profound sorrow of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the earthquake incident that took place in the YAR recently and which resulted in heavy human and material losses. He also promised that necessary aid will be provided to alleviate part of the losses inflicted on the YAR Muslim people due to this destructive earthquake.

FREE VOICE OF IRAN ON SOVIET PLANS FOR AZARBAYJAN

GF151803 (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran 1500 GMT 15 Dec 82

[Excerpt] Compatriots, you are listening to the Free Voice of Iran. Dear listeners, the Free Voice of Iran wants liberation and independence for Iran and in this endeavor, warns both Eastern and Western superpowers that Iran belongs to the Iranians and any attempt to divide Iran will result in a crushing response from the nation.

A prime example of such attempts recently was shown by the new Soviet leadership cadre. As you know, Geydar Aliyev, member of the Politburo of the Communist Party and deputy Soviet premier, has asked for the unification of the Soviet and Iranian Azarbayjans.

To achieve this goal, the Communist Tudeh Party and its traitorous radio, which is broadcasting its programs from Baku, have begun new efforts and have announced the formation of a new democratic organization similar to the one of Gholamyahya and Pishevari. Such satanic (attempts?) are against the sovereignty of Iran and endanger the national unity of Iranians; many Iranian organizations and groups, freedom-seeking Iranians and especially writers, Armed Forces members, both in Iran and abroad, have become our allies. A number of opposition activists have asked us to warn the Iranian nation and announce our support for national struggle for the freedom and independence of Iran.

KEYHAN ON SAUDI TORTURE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

GF161140 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 16 Dec 82

[From "Press Review" program]

[Text] KEYHAN newspaper, published in Tehran in Arabic, carried a report on the practices of physical and psychological torture by the Saudi regime in its prison cells against Saudi Muslim and other mujahidin.

The report in part said: The Human Rights Committee in Saudi Arabia announced in its statement that political prisoners and Muslim mujahidin in the cells of agent Al Sa'ud's regime are subjected to various forms of torture. In its statement which carries the names of political and Muslim prisoners in Saudi cells, the committee requested the Arabian Peninsula peoples, political and social organizations, educated Arabs, and the entire world to pressure the Saudi regime to release these prisoners. It also called on them to denounce the torture tactics practiced by the Saudi authorities.

Following the report, the paper said: The statement handed to the IRNA office in Damascus carried the names of 55 persons who recently were detained by the Saudi security forces and put in jail. The statement said the Saudi authorities have tortured a number of political prisoners, including judges, engineers, journalists, chief editors of newspapers and magazines, university and school students, employees, workers, women and children.

RECENT AFGHAN MUJAHIDIN OPERATIONS REPORTED

GF161130 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 16 Dec 82

[Text] Eighty Soviet and Afghan troops were killed, including six Soviet officers, and eight tanks were destroyed during two violent battles last week between the Afghan Muslim mujahidin and the joint Soviet and Afghan Government forces in Herat Province in western Afghanistan. After the operations, the Soviet forces shelled a number of villages in Herat Province.

In Nimruz Province, in southwestern Afghanistan, the Afghan Muslim mujahidin clashed with the joint Soviet and Afghan Government forces, destroyed three vehicles and killed all the troops of the joint forces.

A defecting Soviet soldier named (Kamal Jan) said the Soviet forces have lost 30,000 troops since their invasion of Afghanistan. This Soviet soldier defected from his camp of 6 December and joined the Afghan Muslim mujahidin.

CUSTOMS OFFICE REPORTS IMPORTS INCREASE

GF151614 Tehran IRNA in English 1552 GMT 15 Dec 82

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 15, IRNA -- Imports increased 10 percent in weight and 15 percent in value in the first seven months of 1361 (started March 22 1982) compared to the corresponding period last year.

According to figures released by the Iranian Customs Office, imports weighed 9.15 million tons worth 762 billion rials in the first seven months of 1360 (started March 22, 1981) and increased to 10.1 million tons worth 878 billion rials this year.

Also the non-oil export figures fell 24 percent in value while it remained unchanged in weight. During this period, 135,000 tons of non-oil goods were exported at a value of 14.4 billion rials this year, while in the corresponding period last year exports were valued at 19.4 billion rials.

The Custom office also noted in its reports that during the past seven months 98 percent of all trade were import items and only two percent of the trading activity were related to exports.

ECONOMIC HEADQUARTERS ALLOTS AGRICULTURE FUNDS

GF141625 Tehran IRNA in English 1525 GMT 14 Dec 82

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 14, IRNA -- In its Monday meeting, the Economic Mobilisation Headquarters (EMH) approved funds for various agricultural activites and continued discussions on regulating the activities of the cooperative.

The agriculture bank was commissioned to appropriate up to 600 million rials for farmers and agro-industry companies which have contracts with the Dezful Sugar Company in Khuzestan Province in order to increase the production of sugar beet by increasing the amount of land under cultivation.

Also, the Karun Agro-Industry Company, also in Khuzestan Province, was alloted some 3,700 million rials in order to increase its amount of land under sugar cane cultivation and the plan and budget organisation was commissioned to fund the expenses needed for basic land grading and drainage system construction.

The EMH also approved some 400 to 500 million rials in revolving funds for the Agriculture Ministry in order to purchase the necessary motor pumps, pipes and other equipment needed by farmers who have received lands through the land reform headquarters.

In another decision, the Kerman regional electricity company was alloted some 400 million rials in order to increase its development credits.